771 legend of the bamboo ancestor described previ-
769 ously.[1] It is similar to the idea of regarding an animal or plant species as the totemic being of a race or tribe and the belief in the blood relationship between these species and the constituent members of the tribe. As to the pear tree which is often connected with the pine and similarly worshipped, it is supposed that it has certain affinity with that pear tree under which the girl slept in the story of "a tsa".

778 (2) To the left of their village there is a
796 forest called min-chih, (people's area), in
769 which there are a few tall pine and pear trees. These are regarded as the spirits of "a tsa po". The third day of the third moon every year the elders of the village would lead all the males of the village over twelve years old to offer sacrifices to these gods. The participants each break a branch of pine or pear tree and plant it at the foot of the large pine tree. During the sacrificial ceremony girls over twelve years old are barred from witnessing it. The pine and the pear trees in the vicinity of the "people's area" are out of bounds, and those violating their sanctity and breaking even a small branch are subject to severe punishment. From this we may gather that they impart a spiritual meaning to the pine and pear trees in the "people's area".

771 (3) They call the pine ancestor "a tsa po";
769 they also call themselves in the Lolo language "a tsa po". From this similarity in the name of their tribe and that of their pine ancestor, it may be supposed that they use the pine tree as their tribal name.

Summarizing the above three points, it may be said that their custom of worshipping the pine tree is closely related to totemism.

824 Aside from the worship of plants which can
771 be traced to totemism handed down from ancient

[1] [see category 116, pp 13-15. -- Analyst]

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times, the following two other conditions may also give rise to the worship of pine and pear trees. (1) In their high mountains and deep valleys no other objects could have inspired more awe and terror than the huge, lofty, majestic pine and pear trees that arouse in them an illusion of grandeur and reverence. Sometimes these trees seem alive as the leaves rustle and the branches sway in the winds; at other times miraculous incidents occur that give them a sense of awe and worship and the belief that these are inhabited by spirits. From this belief they developed rituals of worship. (2) Occupying an area of lean earth unsuited for crops and living a hard life, they find that the pine and the pear trees are prolific in their yields as sources of timber and fuel. As main staples of wealth these play an important part in their economic life. Thus their economic necessity and the economic importance of the trees have given rise among these primitive people to the cult of plant worship.

Furthermore, totemism is at the same time a social system. In their present ancestor worship, although we discover certain traces of totemism, there are no evident signs of a social system. Therefore, whether the worship of pine and pear trees actually belongs to totemism depends upon the evidence of more reliable materials in a future study.